

NEWS NOTES

Commonwealth Banking Corporation

On the occasion of the sesqui-centenary of establishment of savings banking in Australia, the Commonwealth Savings Bank, one of three banks comprising the Commonwealth Banking Corporation, during July mounted an exhibit in its historic Barrack Street, Sydney premises.

The display, arranged by the Corporation's archives section and entitled '150 Years of Savings Banking in Australia', included: reproduction of advertisement in 10 July 1819 issue of the Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser announcing establishment of Australia's first savings bank, 'Campbell's Bank'; manuscript summary of business, 1819 - 31, of Campbell's Bank, authenticated by Robert Campbell senior, secretary of the bank; photostats of accounts conducted for Robert Campbell senior, John Cadman and Ludwig Leichhardt by successor to Campbell's Bank, the Savings Bank of N.S.W. (the 'Barrack Street Bank'); legal documents executed by Barrack Street Bank during 1840's; examples of depositors' passbooks and stationery used by Australian savings banks in 19th century; and photographs of early premises and staff of C.S.B. and various banks which have amalgamated with it.

Text of plaque commemorating the sesqui-centenary, erected by C.S.B. at its Barrack Street, Sydney office, reads:

The Pyrmont sandstone wall to which this plaque is affixed was built in 1849 as part of the first building in Australia to be erected as a savings bank.

It was the head office of the Savings Bank of New South Wales which, founded in 1832, took over in 1833 the business of Australia's first savings bank, "Campbell's Bank" (established in 1819).

In 1848 the Savings Bank of New South Wales acquired this site and a two-storey building with a colonnade of six fluted wooden Doric columns was erected. The premises were first used for banking business on 17th January, 1850.

In 1888 a third storey was added. At this time the ground floor colonnade of Doric columns was replaced by a granite colonnade of the same order and Ionic and Corinthian colonnades were erected at first and second floor levels.

The new columns were made in Scotland of Balmoral granite from the Aberdeen district. Balustrading, capping and base are of St. Anne black marble and balusters of turned Boronia or Rouge marble (all Italian marbles). The Ionic capitals are cast bronze, the Corinthian carved granite.

In 1914 the Savings Bank of New South Wales was merged with the Government Savings Bank of New South Wales, the savings bank business of which was amalgamated in 1931 with that of the Commonwealth Savings Bank of Australia.

From time to time the interior of the premises has been renovated. The external facade of the building, however, with its superimposition of Doric, Ionic and Corinthian columns undisturbed, has in general been preserved as a relic of colonial architecture and of the history of Australian banking.

Erected by the Commonwealth Savings Bank of Australia on 17th July, 1969 to commemorate the 150th anniversary of savings banking in Australia.

F. Scott-Halliday,
Archivist.

ARCHIVES IN NORTH AMERICA

Mr R. F. Doust, Senior Archivist in the Archives Office of New South Wales, was a special guest of the Genealogical Society of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints at a World Conference on Records organized by the Society in Salt Lake City, Utah from the 4th to 8th August, 1969. The theme of the conference was "Records Preservation in an Uncertain World", and the seven thousand conference registrants were able to choose from papers on topics ranging from genealogy and heraldry to methods of repair and physical preservation of documents, and computer based indexing and retrieval systems.

The Genealogical Society has microfilmed records, mainly of births, deaths and marriages but including others of use in genealogical searches, in many parts of the world. Some records in the Archives Office of New South Wales were microfilmed in 1961 and 1962. The original negative microfilm is stored near Salt Lake City in air-conditioned, bomb-proof storage vaults inside a granite mountain, while positive copies are available for public use in the Genealogical Society's Library in Salt Lake City, which is equipped with over 250 microfilm readers. Positive copies have also been given to the institutions which hold the original records.

Following the World Conference, Mr Doust visited archival institutions in Atlanta, Georgia; Washington, D.C.; Trenton, New Jersey; and Ottawa, Canada. In Washington he spent some time investigating the SPINDEX II project being developed in the National Archives and Records Service with the aid of a grant from the Council on Library Resources. SPINDEX II is a project for the administrative control of manuscript collections and archives and for the indexing of finding aids to collections. The current program, following on an earlier pilot project on the National Union Catalogue of Manuscript Collections in the Library of Congress, is being first applied to the Presidential Libraries, (under the control of the National Archives), but will later extend to all the holdings of the National Archives and Records Service, both in its Washington building and in the thirteen Federal Records Centres throughout the United States. There appears to be some prospect that the SPINDEX II computer program can be used to index existing finding aids in the Archives Office of New South Wales.

Printed by **Business Offset Service Pty. Ltd.**,
206 Castlereagh Street, Sydney. 2000. Tel.: 26 1788